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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

SUFFOLK COUNTY

TEMPERANCE SOCIETY,

AT THE

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SIMULTANEOUS CELEBRATION,

At Faneuil Hall, Feb. 25, 1834.

PUBLISHED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE MASSACHUSETTS TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

BOSTON:
FORD AND DAMRELL,
AGENTS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS TEMPERANCE SOCIETY,
Temperance Press.....Wilson's Lane.

APRIL, 1834.

☞ The following pages contain the proceedings of the Temperance Meeting at Faneuil Hall, on the evening of the 25th of February, made up from notes taken on the spot. It is not pretended to give the exact language, or all the sentiments, of the speakers on that interesting occasion. The substance, only, of their remarks, is here attempted to be given.

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PROCEEDINGS, &c.

A MEETING of the Suffolk County Temperance Society was held at Faneuil Hall on the evening of the 25th Feb., to which the members of the Massachusetts Temperance Society, the Legislative Temperance Society, the different Ward Societies in Boston, and the citizens generally friendly to temperance, were invited. The hall was filled with anxious and expecting citizens at an early hour, the number present being computed at between two and three thousand, probably a greater number than ever before assembled in this country on a similar occasion.

The meeting was called to order by the President of the Society, RICHARD FLETCHER, Esq.; and after an impressive prayer by the Rev. Mr. Gannett, the President briefly stated the objects of the meeting, the operations of the Suffolk County Society, and their designs for the future.

He stated, that in 1832, the Executive Committee of the American Temperance Society recommended that simultaneous meetings should be held in all the towns and villages in the country by the friends of temperance. Accordingly, the 26th of February was designated for that purpose; and on that day, last year, meetings were held in different parts of the country, in pursuance of the recommendation of the American Temperance Society. The National Temperance Convention, held at Philadelphia in May last, recommended that simultaneous meetings of Temperance Societies should be held on the last Tuesday of February, 1834, not only throughout this country, but throughout the whole civilized world, where the influence

of temperance had found a footing; which was approved of by the State Convention held at Worcester; and now it is a cheerful and encouraging reflection, that at this time, meetings for similar good and holy purposes are held, not only throughout this country, but in various parts of Europe, in India, Asia, the South Sea Islands, and in some parts of benighted Africa. They are all engaged in the anxious inquiry of what has been done, and what remains to be done to extend the great principles of temperance.

The object is now to review the proceedings of the past year, and to suggest and adopt whatever measures may be deemed expedient for promoting the cause of temperance, and perpetuating its blessings in the land. It is for this purpose that the Suffolk County Temperance Society has appointed this meeting, and it is ardently to be hoped that the influence of temperance may be felt far and wide, and that the friends of temperance may zealously exert themselves in extending its blessings.

Ellis Gray Loring, Esq., the Secretary of the Suffolk County Temperance Society, then proceeded to give a brief sketch of the origin of this Society.

In the summer of 1831, at a numerous meeting of gentlemen in Boston, the question was discussed of the expediency of establishing a City Temperance Society: this resulted in the organization of the Boston Society for the Promotion of Temperance. That Society was the instrument of much good: it prepared the public mind for extending the benefits of temperance, and it adopted various methods to produce this effect: it obtained the signatures of seventy-five respectable physicians to a well-known certificate of the pernicious effects of ardent spirits when used as a drink,—a certificate which has been widely circulated, and has been productive of much good.

The State Temperance Convention at Worcester, last September, proposed that the friends of temperance should organize throughout the Commonwealth, that a State Society should be formed, to be called the Massachusetts Temperance Society, and County Societies also auxiliary thereto. In consequence of this, the name of the Boston Temperance Society, in October, 1833, was changed to the

Suffolk County Society; and an Executive Committee of five gentlemen was at that time chosen, who have assiduously devoted themselves to its objects. They appointed an Agent to deliver Temperance addresses in every Ward, who entered upon the duties of his office exactly sixty days ago; and Ward Societies have since been formed, auxiliary to the County Society. The formation of some of these Societies has been so recent, that the returns from some of the Wards are perhaps imperfect; but the following statement is believed to be nearly correct:

In Ward	1	there are	732	members.
"	2	"	555	"
"	3	"	1,099	"
"	4	"	663	"
"	5	"	892	"
"	6	"	682	"
"	7	"	414	"
"	8	"	608	"
"	9	"	513	"
"	10	"	839	"
"	11	"	377	"
"	12	"	340	" exclusive of

a Society in South Boston, consisting of 404 members; the whole number belonging to these Societies in Boston consisting of 8,205.*

Such is the cheering result of the labors of these individuals within the last two months, as expressed in black and white,—a result of a nature highly gratifying. It is a singular fact, that, if we suppose the population of this city to consist of 72,000, and allow the usual number for children under twelve years of age, every fifth person who may be met in the streets is not only friendly to the cause of temperance, but devoted to it by having signed the temperance pledge.

It is to be hoped that the cause will gather strength, and the benefits of temperance increase; and generations yet unborn will doubtless have reason to bless the day when these Societies were formed. It is proposed to continue the measures which have already been commenced; to

* Since increased to nearly, if not quite, 9000.

pour light on this subject, by speaking the truth in love; and, by keeping up a systematic organization, secure that union which is strength.

The following resolution was offered by Rev. BARON STOW, pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Boston:

Resolved, "That the Temperance Reform, and the measures in operation to promote it, by the diffusion of information, and the exertion of a kind moral influence, are deserving the support of the Patriot, the Philanthropist, and the Christian."

After reading the resolution, Mr. Stow made, in substance, the following remarks:

Sir,—Every individual, as he entered this hall to-night, must have had his memory refreshed and his sensibilities touched. It is a place hallowed as the nursery of principles that have emancipated one nation, and are even now undermining thrones and dominions in another hemisphere; and if the spirits of our patriotic fathers who here rocked the cradle of liberty, and disciplined those principles into vigorous maturity, are not now present to encourage their posterity, in a second effort for independence, yet associations of peculiar majesty now throng around the heart, and prepare it for the occasion that has assembled us together. It was here that, sixty years ago, Hancock, Warren, Quincy, Otis, and other master spirits of the age, stood fearlessly forth as advocates of a noble cause, and their patriotic appeals found an enthusiastic response in the bosoms of the lovers of liberty. The controversy was then with a foreign power, whose commissioned instruments of aggression were in the very midst. The question was, how shall we resist an enemy who is trying to crush us? Here did these stern patriots, at the peril of their lives, their fortunes, and their blood, meet, deliberate, and devise measures for the benefit of their fellow-citizens; and here did they pour forth those prodigies of fiery phraseology, whose traces are hardly yet obliterated from these walls. And could that venerated patriot, Freedom's early champion and early martyr, whose descendant I now see before me, be permitted to plead at this time and on this occasion, he would again repeat the following soul-stirring language:

"The voice of your fathers' blood cries to you from the ground—'My sons, scorn to be SLAVES!' In vain we met the frowns of tyrants; in vain we crossed the boister-

ous ocean, found a new world, and prepared it for the happy residence of liberty; in vain we toiled; in vain we fought; we bled in vain, if you, our offspring, want valor to repel the assaults of her invaders. Follow not the dictates of passion; but enlist yourselves under the sacred banner of reason: use every method in your power to secure your rights; at least prevent the curses of posterity from being heaped upon your memories."

Is not the vindication of the doctrines of temperance an enterprise of a character sufficiently high and ennobled to recommend it to the favor of every man who loves his country, his race, and his God,—the patriot, and the philanthropist, and the Christian? Who is the patriot? The man who loves his country, and is ever ready to sacrifice his own interest to public utility. And what connexion has the Temperance Reform with the growth and prosperity of his country, and the happiness of his fellow-countrymen? It has much. It contemplates the removal of an evil of an hundred years' growth,—an evil which has lately received a partial check, but which is still of portentous magnitude.

Intemperance is an evil which destroys our pecuniary resources at the rate of one hundred millions per annum; which saps the health, and exhausts the muscular energies of our citizens,—the basis of our nation's wealth; which occasions three fourths of the crimes, and four fifths of the pauperism in the land; which annually deposits 30,000 in the drunkard's grave; and is conducting 300,000 more, with accelerating haste, down to the same putrescent home! Let the patriot ponder on this; let him go to the fountain head of the evil, to the caldrons where the multiform elements of destruction are concocted; let him trace these elements as they go up like Gog and Magog in the breadth of the earth, and calculate the mischief which they cause; and let him say if measures undertaken to destroy an evil of such magnitude is not entitled to his support, and to all the influence which he can exert.

The philanthropist professes to love his race, and to sacrifice his convenience and his own good for their benefit. If so, temperance is a cause which deserves all his aid, for it contemplates the annihilation of one of the most prolific causes of human misery,—the rescue of millions from in-

temperance, and the recovery of thousands more to purity and peace, who are now stumbling at the threshold of the sepulchre. The use of ardent spirit as a drink is always hurtful: instead of increasing, it always decreases the resources of the physical constitution. It disturbs the equilibrium of the understanding, and deranges all the intellectual machinery; exasperates the passions, unhinges the will, and stupifies the conscience. Its daily burnt-offering consists of a hecatomb of victims. The philanthropist surely cannot withhold his support from an enterprise which contemplates the expulsion of such a demon of darkness.

Nor does the promotion of the cause of temperance less accord with the duties of a Christian. He loves his country, mankind, and his God. He believes the holy Scriptures, and looks over the broad horizon, and sees that the evil of intemperance has a tremendous bearing on the relation of man to his Creator; for what can be more desolating to the moral feelings; what makes such havoc with the social affections, and places man in a more hostile attitude towards religion? So long as a man persists in the use of this inebriating poison, his reason is fettered, and his mind is invulnerable to all arguments: he makes a stercoracious hot-bed of his heart, in which every thing anti-Christian most luxuriously flourishes.

Every one who has a regard for the religion of Jesus Christ, should lend his aid to the cause of temperance. The means by which this great object may be promoted are not viewed alike by all who are friendly to the cause. On one point, however, we are agreed: *total abstinence* is the sole and sovereign remedy for intemperance.

Temperance reform must be effected by moral means. Among freemen, coercion is utterly impracticable; and legislation cannot do the work, for laws not sanctioned by public opinion will be useless. The slave trade was not abolished by the British parliament, until the good sense of the nation demanded it. Persuasion is the means by which this great object must be achieved. By persuasion, and the exertion of a kind moral influence, we must endeavor to pour abroad light into the community, informing the understandings, and awakening the consciences of the people, and create a public sentiment that shall rectify the pulpit, the press, the bench, and the state and national

legislation, until the popular mass, one and all, will touch not, handle not, but turn away from the poisonous cup, even though it should be offered "without money or without price." Then will many thousands of dram-shops, those slaughter-houses of Satan, cease to flow with the blood of the slain, and be closed for ever. Then will the alembics of wrath, which now send up their dark smoke around you to pollute the heavens, cool down, and the fires beneath them eternally expire, for none will come to purchase or bear away their pestiferous products. Then will righteousness dwell in the land; and the patriot, the philanthropist, and the Christian, rejoice together at the happy transformation.

The Rev. Mr. HILDRETH, Agent of the Massachusetts Temperance Society, said that it was believed that the evils of intemperance were the result of the use of ardent and distilled spirits; and also, that, if all men could be persuaded to leave off drinking ardent spirit, the great object of the Temperance Reform would be achieved. But while we labor to convince the intemperate that drinking ardent spirit is a highly injurious practice, and thus remove the obstacles which arise from ignorance in relation to the use of this article, we ought not to overlook other obstacles in the way. I therefore offer the following resolution:

Resolved, "That the traffic in ardent spirit as a drink presents a formidable barrier to the Temperance Reform; that the public good imperiously demands its abolition; and that, in the opinion of this meeting, it is morally wrong to engage or continue in it."

This resolution presents two topics, which I shall consider, viz.: the traffic in ardent spirit presents a formidable barrier to temperance reformation; and this traffic is morally wrong. I am willing to admit that respectable persons are engaged in this odious traffic; aye, persons who are aware of the evils of intemperance, and are willing that all men should be temperate, and practise total abstinence if they choose. But by thus keeping up the respectability of drinking, they ensure the continuance of the practice. The traffic in ardent spirits does almost all that is done to keep alive the intemperance already created; for, if no ardent spirit could be purchased, no person would get drunk with it. I repeat, that many respectable persons

are engaged in this traffic, persons even who profess an interest in the cause of temperance; and these persons feel aggrieved when it is suggested that their actions are not friendly to this cause. Such men I am always disposed to treat with candor. I do not appear here to make use of hard words, but soft words, and as hard arguments as I can bring.

To determine the question, whether the traffic in ardent spirit promotes intemperance, and retards the Temperance Reform, it is only necessary to ask, where do intemperate persons get the intoxicating liquor? They get it from the dealer. He acknowledges it. He sells to all who ask,—to the moderate drinker, and to the wretch whom he knows will be drunk with it in a few hours. But he says, "I am not to blame—I do not ask him to buy." But he *does* ask him to buy. He gives notice on his sign that he has ardent spirit to sell, and thus, with the strength of a four-fold cord, he draws his victim to the counter to buy the intoxicating draught. He thus as effectually secures his customers, as if he went out into the street and brought them into his shop by force.

It is a serious truth, that those who are habitually intemperate, are not in their right minds; their reason is affected; they are slaves in the true sense of the word; therefore it is useless for the dealer to contend that they came voluntarily into his shop to buy. So long as the article is for sale, and can be easily had, it will be bought by those who have a raging appetite for it; and in this way it is evident that the dealers present a formidable barrier to Temperance Reform.

If it be possible that those who sell ardent spirit are friendly to temperance, so let it be; their business is cruelly opposed to it. It has a tendency to promote intemperance, as much as the publication of an immoral and blasphemous paper in this city tends to promote immorality and irreligion. It may be said, that traffic in other liquors promotes intemperance: I do not deny this. But this does not prove, that it is not promoted by the traffic in ardent spirit. The public good requires that this odious traffic should be brought to an end.

The traffic in ardent spirit is morally wrong. Business transactions which are not done in good faith are morally

wrong, or immoral. If a certain line of business cannot be conducted with good faith and love to our neighbor, to all our neighbors, and to all mankind, that line of business is morally wrong; or if the obvious results of a line of business are injurious to our fellow-men, causing more vice than virtue, more sickness than health, more misery than happiness, such line of business is morally wrong. To apply this to the traffic in ardent spirit, I have often put this question to persons engaged in this traffic: "Is it a blessing or a curse?" The answer always is, "it is a curse." If so, this traffic is morally wrong. I do not impeach the characters for integrity of any individuals engaged in this traffic. I know men who, every day of their lives, sell liquor which makes men drunk, who would not, for their right hand, take one cent more than the fair market price for the intoxicating draught. A person lately told me he was in a store where ardent spirit was sold. A poor old woman of color came into the store with a bottle, and some change to buy rum. The rum was drawn, full measure; the dealer turned it into the bottle, but found it would not hold it all. He poured the remainder into a glass, held it towards the old woman, and urged her to drink it, as the bottle would not quite hold a pint. So fearful was this man of doing wrong!

But those persons who are engaged in selling ardent spirit, are almost always engaged in selling various other things; and many respectable persons go there to buy who are too much in the habit of overlooking that branch of business which consists in the sale of ardent spirit. In the country, the respectable farmer, in his handsome chaise or convenient wagon, drives to the store to purchase necessaries for his family; but he is also too frequently prepared to bring away with him a gallon of rum. Perhaps his wife is deputed to buy the poisonous liquid; or a modest, well educated daughter goes to purchase a new dress of the latest fashion, but she must not return without a little rum for "Pa!"

Such circumstances as these have a tendency to veil this traffic: we do not see it in its proper light. Suppose the husband who gets drunk and abuses his family; the mother who neglects her children; the children, poorly clad, who are daily sent to buy liquor for their besotted parents—suppose these were the *only* customers of these

shops; would not the dealers then say that this traffic is morally wrong?

It may be that the traffic in ardent spirit will not wholly cease, because it may be applied to useful purposes. If we can only succeed in convincing the dealers that the traffic in it as *drink* is morally wrong, doubtless we shall soon find means of getting rid of the injurious part of the traffic, and retaining the useful.

But, to look at the subject in a more impressive light, let us suppose that all the traffic in ardent spirit now carried on in this Commonwealth were to constitute the entire business of a single town on the sea-board: there come all the ships that transport this poison; there smoke all the distilleries; and there are planted all the shops which contain ardent spirit. Let us also suppose the persons who keep these shops retain all the wealth and respectability they now possess. Let us further suppose that in this town take place all the brawls, all the assaults and batteries, and all the murders caused by intemperance; that there are all the broken-hearted wives, and disconsolate and neglected children of drunkards; all the diseases are there which are brought on by ardent spirit; and there are daily sunk in death all the wretched victims of this fell destroyer. Here you have the moral as well as physical results. Here you have the facts. A great town, full of people, full of business, and no likelihood that the population will diminish, for you will be sure to get abundance of recruits from the *moderate drinkers*. What name can you give to a town like this? Can you give it the name of any other town in this Commonwealth? a name associated with ideas of comfort and happiness? or will you give it the name which associates only with "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth?"

Is there any other traffic alike injurious? If there is, it is morally wrong. Suppose all the business of the leather trade was concentrated in this way, or the shoe-making business; would it make a town bearing any moral resemblance to the town alone engaged in vending ardent spirit? Look at Lynn, North Bridgewater, Abington, or Randolph, and you have an answer. Those towns present an appearance of almost unequalled prosperity and comfort. The moral condition of the citi-

zens of those towns would contrast strongly with the condition of the inhabitants of the city of *rum*.

Perhaps justice requires me to say, that dealers in ardent spirit, are desirous that this odious traffic should come to an end. I have conversed with many individuals, who express a wish to that effect, and who are willing to pledge themselves to give it up as soon as the *respectable* portion of the community leave off buying. Then let us take them at their word. It is time that this traffic should cease. It is the source of intemperance; and if you would put out the fire, pour on cold water, not *alcohol;* that which will quench, not that which inflames.

The Hon. Ira Barton, of the Senate, said :—I rise, sir, to reciprocate the civilities of the Suffolk County Society to the Legislative Society; and can say, in behalf of that Society, that we sympathize, and will cheerfully co-operate in the great and benevolent object in view. Whatever may be the speculative opinions of the gentlemen of the legislature in regard to the expediency at present of suppressing the traffic in ardent spirit, the formation and flourishing condition of the Legislative Society prove that they feel deeply interested in the subject. The organization of this Society is but recent, and yet are already enrolled among its members all the members of the executive department, a large portion of one, and at least a majority of the other branch of the legislature. I shall now, sir, trespass on the patience of this assembly, by submitting a few remarks, the object of which will be stated in the following resolution :

Resolved, "That, in view of the manifold social and domestic evils which arise from the use of ardent spirit in the community, it is the duty of every citizen to abstain entirely from their use."

Sir, in regard to the traffic in ardent spirit, you have already had a lucid argument from the gentleman who has preceded me. The issue upon the point in question has already been made up. Let me suppose that a meeting at this time was congregated of intelligent citizens from every class in the community, and I should address them, and attempt to persuade them that they ought to partake reasonably and moderately of this bounty of

Providence,—would not such men sneer at my doctrines, despise my philosophy, and pity my folly?

In the resolution proposed, I have alluded to the social and domestic evils which are not unfrequently the offspring of intemperance. The domestic fireside may be considered the source of misery, as well as the fountain of happiness; and at the fireside of the drunkard, how many tears are shed of anguish and distress! How many widows and orphans mourn in secret over poverty and degradation caused by intemperance! But there is another view to be taken of this subject. The use of ardent spirit is not only blasting to domestic happiness, but baneful to all the free institutions of this republic. These dangers have not been sufficiently appreciated; but it is a truism, that the basis of a people's happiness is intelligence and virtue. We have been too much in the habit of regarding our constitution, our laws, and all the machinery of our government, as the means of continuing our happiness, and promoting good order in society. But if the *public* mind is not kept in proper tone, the laws and constitution of a country, although they might have originated in wisdom, will be overthrown by the first breath of popular excitement.

I rose, sir, to congratulate you on the prospect which is now presented to our view. It is an auspicious prospect, to behold so many individuals ardently and devotedly engaged in a good cause. We are associated with twelve millions of people, whose fate is identified with our success. We are embarked in the same ship, and we must sink or swim together. But a few days since, I noticed in one of the newspapers of this city a fact of an alarming nature,—the formation of an Anti-Temperance Society in that State which has been emphatically called the key-stone of the Union; and, in a succeeding number of the paper, it is stated that more than one hundred thousand voters in that same State cannot read the name which is printed on the vote which they carry at the polls!

It is truly gratifying to see so many *young men* of worth and respectability devotedly engaged in this enterprise. They have a duty to perform high in the scale of moral sublimity, and worthy of the descendants of the hardy

and virtuous pilgrims; and I hope that they will always recollect that a nation of *drunkards* must be a nation of *slaves*.

Daniel Frost, Jun. Esq., Agent of the Suffolk County Society, said:—I wish, sir, to take this opportunity to offer a resolution, and make a few remarks. I am aware that I am addressing the citizens of Boston, who have often listened with patience to my remarks upon the subject of temperance; but I hope they will again yield me their attention, while I address them on this interesting occasion. The resolution which I offer is as follows:

Resolved, "That the principle of general and voluntary *pledges* to total abstinence from ardent spirit provides an effectual remedy for the evils of intemperance, and that it is highly important to extend this pledge to all the population of our country."

This resolution contains two propositions: 1. That *total abstinence* is the proper remedy for intemperance; and, 2. That this remedy should be introduced into our homes and our families. The miseries of intemperance furnish a theme which is not entirely new. Philanthropy has long sought to alleviate the woes which it entails on the human race. Societies for this benevolent object have been formed many years ago; but the attempt, until lately, has proved unsuccessful, and the friends of temperance sat down and wept. But, in a joyful hour, the voice of mercy whispered a remedy—a remedy of easy application—a remedy which it is in the power of every one to employ. *Let it alone.* Let it alone. This good counsel was heard, and it was adopted. The honor of discovering and recommending this efficient remedy belongs to no man, but to a host of good men. It is an act of which an angel might well be proud. It has been said, that it is idle to recommend total abstinence as the remedy for intemperance. What! stop *drinking drams!* The idea is unreasonable and ridiculous. But the means proposed have proved adequate to the end. The good counsel was adopted, and it is now admitted that this remedy is the right remedy, and adapted to the work to be done.

When the doctrine of total abstinence was first advocated, there were in this country 48,000 distilleries, and

grog-shops innumerable, well attended by infatuated men, to the great injury of their constitutions, and the destruction of their moral principles. And yet when this remedy was proposed, many began to doubt its efficacy, especially when the recipe was written out in the form of a temperance constitution. They even doubted whether temperance societies were adapted to the feelings of the community!

It has been urged that this remedy is not adapted to persons who are not drunkards; that to sign a temperance pledge is virtually admitting that there is danger to themselves in using ardent spirit as a drink. But it is an important principle in philosophy, that, where there are two sides, one safe and the other doubtful, we ought to take the *safe side;* and the sober man who signs the pledge adopts this principle. Another says, "I do not wish to give up my liberty: I wish to have it in my *power* to drink a glass of grog whenever I please." Another says, "I seldom drink ardent spirit, and why should *I* sign the pledge?" To such a caviller, it may be remarked, that, "if the cause is a good cause and deserving of support, you ought not to withhold from it your influence." No man can consistently urge an intemperate neighbor to join a temperance society, unless he is also a member of that society. If none but intemperate persons aid the cause of temperance, these useful institutions will soon be neglected and destroyed.

To those temperate persons who say, "*I* never taste spirituous liquors; of what benefit can it be to me or to others to sign the pledge?" it may be said—suppose a charitable man has resolved to give $1000 to a hospital. The resolution is a good one; but would not the trustees of the institution feel more secure of the donation, if the proper documents were drawn up and signed? If a man signs a temperance pledge, he has obligated himself to abstain from certain practices, and he cannot rescind his contract.

It has been urged that signing a pledge destroys the freedom of choice. If this be so, the adoption of any virtuous resolution does it. Where is the man who would not rejoice at doing an act which will deter him from doing wrong?

And, sir, we are told that signing a pledge is a weak

and childish thing, got up in modern times, and undeserving of public attention. But it is not so. When the crew of the Mayflower landed at Cape Cod, on the 11th day of November, 1620, they signed a pledge to stand by and protect each other, and to obey the acts of the majority. And who signed that pledge? The first on the list is John Carver. Who next? William Bradford. Who was the next weak mortal thus foolishly entrapped? Miles Standish. These are the names of men who were *once* thought to possess a due share of physical and moral courage. And these men were so weak and childish as to adopt a pledge! But we do not learn that their moral agency was destroyed thereby.

In 1766, a committee of the citizens of Boston was appointed to draw up a *subscription paper*, by which the signers bound themselves not to purchase certain articles of traffic with Great Britain. In August, 1768, two hundred and eleven merchants also signed an agreement "not to import on our own account, or on commission, or purchase of any that may import from Great Britain, except articles necessary for the fisheries, until the *Acts* imposing the duties are repealed. And if goods are consigned to us to sell on commission, we will re-ship them, or not receive them." By signing such *pledges* as these, fellow-citizens, our ancestors paved the way to the independence which they afterwards achieved; and it is indeed singular that their descendants should deride the use of pledges.

Yes, our ancestors met in this very hall, from time to time, and, by signing *pledges*, began to rock the cradle of American Independence. In January 23, 1770, a meeting was held here of the citizens of Boston and vicinity, William Phillips, Moderator, when it was "*voted* that each of us strictly and religiously enjoin it upon our respective families totally to abstain from the use of *tea*, upon any pretence whatever, until the duty thereon is repealed." These men knew there was a power in union; and the acting governor of the province knew it also. He was aware of the nature of these *pledges*, and sent an officer to disperse the assembly. And what was the answer to the summons? "We deem this meeting lawful; and entertain consciences void of offence towards

God and man." And who were these men who thus weakly and childishly signed away their moral liberty? They were the Hancocks, the Quincys, the Otises, and the Adamses of the day! When I contemplate the place on which I now stand, my soul is filled with emotions too big for utterance; and if the spirits of just men made perfect are permitted to participate in the triumphs of virtue on earth as well as in *heaven*, we may suppose that other spirits than ours share with us in the pleasures of this joyful occasion.

In 1774, the citizens of Boston entered into a solemn *league* and *covenant*, by which they bound themselves to have no intercourse in trade with Great Britain, excepting in importing drugs, and articles used in the fisheries, until the duties were repealed. And these measures were ratified and adopted in other towns; and in more than one instance, it was resolved that the names of all those *weak* men, who signed those pledges, should be read at the annual town meetings.

In 1774, also, the Virginia delegation at Williamsburg, adopted a pledge relating to the article of tea, and resolved not to import it, use it, or suffer it to be used in their families. And I now ask whether those Virginia Delegates, with Patrick Henry at their head, were a parcel of irresolute men, so deficient in firmness and moral courage, as to find it necessary to sign a pledge to do good?

But the resolution I have offered, sir, contains another proposition. It recommends that pledges to total abstinence should be extended to *all* the population of our country. This includes females, as well as males. Does this ask too much? Is there no precedent for this also? On the 31st Jan. 1770, the ladies of Boston bound themselves by a pledge to co-operate with the gentlemen, in carrying the measures into effect, which were recommended in this hall, and particularly to abstain from the use of tea, not only in their families, but also to refuse it when offered to them abroad! And ought we to be ashamed to refer to such a pledge. The signers were the wives and mothers of the most virtuous patriots of the day.

But it is urged that when by our names and influence we sustain the cause of temperance, we invade the rights of those who are engaged in the traffic of vending spirituous liquors. But I deny the right of any man to spread

poison through the community, and urge their fellow-men to partake of a baneful liquid which leads to misery and ruin. Such a man may justify himself before a human tribunal, but he cannot justify himself before a heavenly one.

It is also said, it is useless to struggle against public sentiment. What is public sentiment? Does public sentiment require men to get drunk, ruin their constitutions, shorten their lives, commit the worst of crimes, even murder? I deny that public sentiment requires anything of the kind.

It has been said, that these exertions in the cause of temperance will be succeeded by a *reaction*. I dislike the word, for it is always introduced to discourage the votaries of benevolence and virtue. If a rich man is applied to for the purpose of assisting any charitable work, ten to one that he will seize his wallet with one hand, and say, "there will soon be a reaction." I should be willing to see that word burnt by the common hangman. What reaction has yet been produced in this city? How many thousands rejoice that there has been an *action*, which has thus far contributed to free the country from the evils of intemperance.

What must be the moral texture of that man's heart, who, in these days, is opposed to the progress of the temperance reform? He is aware of all the benefits which it would confer on the human race, and yet he opposes it! But there is nothing to fear from such men. The cause of temperance stands as firm as Mount Atlas, when storms and tempests thunder on its brow, and ocean breaks its billows at its feet. The history of temperance will be written on earth, but it will be published in heaven.

After the vote was taken on the resolution of Mr. Frost, Alden Bradford, Esq., of New Bedford, rose and said:

Mr. President,—I rise, not to make a formal speech, nor to offer an argument, at this late hour, but to give a word of exhortation to this great assembly, before we separate. And in doing even this, I am admonished by the lateness of the evening, as well as by inclination, to be very brief. I am not disposed to obtrude myself many minutes upon the patience of the audience.

I have come up to your city to attend a meeting of the State Temperance Society, of which I am a member and an officer. At that meeting, this afternoon, an invitation was given to join the Suffolk County association, on this occasion. But though I intend to consume but a few moments of your time, in conformity to general usage, at such meetings, I will offer a resolution:

"Deeply sensible that Intemperance, in its nature and tendency, is hostile to individual or social welfare, and in its effects highly injurious to the worldly estate, the health, reputation and moral character of man,—*Resolved*, That a solemn duty rests upon us, to persevere in our efforts with unbending resolution and untiring zeal, to prevent the continuance of this degrading vice in the community."

Sir, it is not my purpose now to refer particularly to these evil effects, or to point out, in detail, the hostility of intemperance to property, health and good morals. Even if there were more time, it would be unnecessary, after the able arguments and full statements presented this evening, and on other recent occasions, to this point. After all which has been said and written on the subject, within a few past years or months, there can be no doubt, with intelligent men, of the various and extensive and fatal evils of intemperance. It is only necessary, then, that we exhort one another to persevere in the glorious cause in which we are engaged,—a cause identified, in a great measure, with the order and peace of society, as well as with the happiness of individuals.

The reverend gentleman who first addressed the meeting (after some remarks from the chair, and a brief relation respecting the formation and present state of the Suffolk Temperance Society), justly referred, and with thrilling effect, to the struggles of our patriot fathers for civil and political freedom: and the gentleman who has just sat down, alluded in a forcible manner to the pilgrim and Puritan fathers of New England; and in so doing, has kindled the best and strongest motives of my heart. O yes, sir, let us remember, that we are the children and descendants of patriotic, moral and pious men; who suffered and toiled, immeasurably, and while life continued, in the cause of human virtue and human improvement. Let us see to it, that we do something in our day,

to make this land worthy the name of the Puritans and pilgrims of 1620 and '30; and of the virtuous patriots of 1775.

We have, indeed, made a noble onset in the warfare against intemperance. The enemy is defeated; and we have learnt our own strength for the contest. Let us hope, that, by the divine blessing and aid, we shall finally triumph over the insidious foe. Let us take to us the whole armor of God, as well as the weapons which honor may furnish, that our efforts be crowned with complete success. I have said that the enemy has been defeated; but he is not vanquished. He has been driven from the open field; he has fled from the light of day. But he still has his lurking places; he is in ambush around us, and near us; he has retired to dark and secret places; but is ready to break in upon us, if we are not constantly on guard, and vigilant at our posts. Let us, then, not relax our efforts to destroy the monster; this enemy of man's best welfare, the enemy of his body and soul. His hostility to our worldly prosperity, to our health and influence and good name, is most manifest. I will not, I need not, labor on this point. And as to the moral character,—and by moral, I mean the spiritual and religious character of man,—is it not fatally injured, is it not wholly destroyed, by the sin of intemperance? Sir, we are told from the highest authority, from the word of God, "that the drunkard cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

Mr. Bradford made a few more remarks, in substance as follows: The efforts made by our fathers in favor of civil liberty, have been the means of awakening or strengthening the love of freedom in Europe. Let our exertions in favor of Christian morals, afford an example to the inhabitants of the old continent, to greater zeal in this more holy cause. Let us endeavor to make our beloved country the abode of righteousness, and a mountain of holiness, that the God of our fathers may smile upon us and bless us. I would call, then, upon all classes of the people; I would especially appeal to men of education and influence in the community: to our legislators, who should be the guardians of the public morals, (that they may maintain the peace and order of society);

to all, I would raise my feeble voice, to join in this blessed work, already so auspiciously begun, that a reformation of morals may generally take place throughout Christendom, and we may be able, in a certain sense, to say, that the age of miracles has returned.

The exercises of the evening were closed by singing, to the tune of Old Hundred, the following Hymn, written for the occasion, by L. M. Sargent, Esq. :

Here freedom's life-cry taught the brave,
Our belted fathers, to be free.
To thee, oh Lord, the child they gave;
Thine was their cause, their trust in thee.

They rock'd and rear'd the bantling here,
Our patriot sires;—and where are they?
Still, in the spirit, they are near;
They mark our steps, our course survey.

Those hearts, so ready at the call,
Those tongues of fire that spurr'd them on,
Lie where their glory wraps them all;
Their fame was ripe, their work was done.

Immortal guides! we hear them still:
Their watch-word still, "BE FREE, BE FREE!"
God of eternal truth, WE WILL!
Our cause is thine, our trust in thee.

Before thy throne, we boast the name
Of FREEMEN:—God, thy frown is just.
Immortals, break your bonds of shame!
Arise, inebriates, from the dust!

Slav'ry and death the cup contains;
Dash to the earth the poison'd bowl!
Softer than silk are iron chains,
Compared with those, that chafe the soul.

Hosannas, Lord, to thee we sing,
Whose power the giant fiend obeys.
What countless thousands tribute bring,
For happier homes, and brighter days.

Thou wilt not break the bruised reed,
Nor leave the broken heart unbound;
The wife regains a husband freed!
The orphan clasps a father found!

Spare, Lord, the thoughtless; guide the blind;
Till man no more shall deem it just
To live, by forging chains to bind
His weaker brother in the dust.

With nature's draught your goblets fill,
And pledge the world that ye are free!
God of eternal truth, WE WILL!
Our cause is thine, our trust in thee!

DECLARATION OF SEVENTY-FIVE PHYSICIANS OF BOSTON.

The subscribers, Physicians of Boston, having been requested, by the Directors of the Boston Society for the Promotion of Temperance, to express their opinion in regard to the effects of ardent spirits, hereby *declare* it to be their opinion, that *men in health are* NEVER *benefited by the use of ardent spirits*,—that, on the contrary, the use of them is a frequent cause of *disease* and *death*, and often renders such diseases as arise from other causes, more difficult of cure, and more fatal in their termination.

Boston, February, 1832.

William Spooner,
James Jackson,
William Ingalls,
John C. Warren,
Benjamin Shurtleff,
John Dixwell,
John Randall,
J. B. Brown,
Walter Channing,
Jacob Bigelow,
George Hayward,
S. D. Townsend,
George Parkman,
Abner Phelps,
Samuel Adams,
Enoch Hale, Jr.,
T. I. Parker,
S. A. Shurtleff,
John Ware,
John Homans,
Woodbridge Strong,
John Jeffries,
Amos Farnsworth,
Alexander Thomas,
William Grigg,
Charles Choate,
Charles Walker,
Henry Dyer,
John C. Howard,
Daniel T. Coit,
Benj. T. Prescott,
Isaac Porter,
Martin Gay,
James Wood,
Thomas Gray, Jr.,
Daniel Harwood,
Augustus A. Gould,
Z. B. Adams,
D. Osgood,
Williams Bradford,
J. F. Flagg,
Edward Reynolds, Jr.,
Thomas W. Parsons,
J. G. Stevenson,
John D. Fisher,
Winslow Lewis, Jr.,
George B. Doane,
Chandler Robbins, Jr.,
Samuel Morrill,
Charles T. Hildreth,
Jerome V. C. Smith,
D. Humphrey Storer,
Joshua B. Flint,
Jonas H. Lane,
Joseph W. McKean,
Fredk. A. Sumner, Jr.,
E. J. Davenport,
N. C. Keep,
Calvin Ellis,
Marshall S. Perry,
Abm. A. Watson,
Thomas H. Thompson,
J. Wilson,
George Bartlett,
Edward Warren,
Benjamin F. Wing,
A. Seaton,
Samuel H. Smith,
L. B. Gale,
Albert Williams,
W. G. Hanaford,
Paul Simpson, Jr.,
John Bliss Stebbins,
Ezra Palmer, Jr.,
J. B. S. Jackson.